

63J-4-606. Public lands transfer study and economic analysis -- Report.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Public lands" is as defined in Section 63L-6-102.

(b) "Transfer of public lands" means the transfer of public lands from federal ownership to state ownership.

(2) (a) The coordinator and the office shall:

(i) conduct a study and economic analysis of the ramifications and economic impacts of the transfer of public lands;

(ii) during the study and economic analysis, consult with county representatives on an ongoing basis regarding how to consider and incorporate county land use plans and planning processes into the analysis; and

(iii) on an ongoing basis, report on the progress and findings of the study to the Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands.

(b) The study and economic analysis shall:

(i) inventory public lands;

(ii) examine public lands':

(A) ownership;

(B) management;

(C) jurisdiction;

(D) resource characteristics;

(E) federal management requirements related to national forests, national recreation areas, or other public lands administered by the United States; and

(F) current and potential future uses and ways that socioeconomic conditions are influenced by those uses;

(iii) determine:

(A) public lands' ongoing and deferred maintenance costs, revenue production, and funding sources;

(B) whether historical federal funding levels have been sufficient to manage, maintain, preserve, and restore public lands and whether that funding level is likely to continue;

(C) the amount of public lands revenue paid to state, county, and local governments and other recipients designated by law from payments in lieu of taxes, timber receipts, secure rural school receipts, severance taxes, and mineral lease royalties;

(D) historical trends of the revenue sources listed in Subsection (2)(b)(iii)(C);

(E) ways that the payments listed in Subsection (2)(b)(iii)(C) can be maintained or replaced following the transfer of public lands; and

(F) ways that, following the transfer of public lands, revenue from public lands can be increased while mitigating environmental impact;

(iv) identify:

(A) existing oil and gas, mining, grazing, hunting, fishing, recreation, and other rights and interests on public lands;

(B) the economic impact of those rights and interests on state, county, and local economies;

(C) actions necessary to secure, preserve, and protect those rights and interests; and

(D) how those rights and interests may be affected in the event the federal government does not complete the transfer of public lands;

(v) evaluate the impact of federal land ownership on:

(A) the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration's ability to administer trust lands for the benefit of Utah schoolchildren;

(B) the state's ability to fund education; and

(C) state and local government tax bases;

(vi) identify a process for the state to:

(A) transfer and receive title to public lands from the United States;

(B) utilize state agencies with jurisdiction over land, natural resources, environmental quality, and water to facilitate the transfer of public lands;

(C) create a permanent state framework to oversee the transfer of public lands;

(D) transition to state ownership and management of public lands using existing state and local government resources; and

(E) indemnify political subdivisions of the state for actions taken in connection with the transfer of public lands;

(vii) examine ways that multiple use of public lands through tourism and outdoor recreation contributes to:

(A) the economic growth of state and local economies; and

(B) the quality of life of Utah citizens;

(viii) using theoretical modeling of various levels of land transfer, usage, and development, evaluate the potential economic impact of the transfer of public lands on state, county, and local governments; and

(ix) recommend the optimal use of public lands following the transfer of public lands.

(3) The coordinator and office shall:

(a) on an ongoing basis, discuss issues related to the transfer of public lands with:

(i) the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration;

(ii) local governments;

(iii) water managers;

(iv) environmental advocates;

(v) outdoor recreation advocates;

(vi) nonconventional and renewable energy producers;

(vii) tourism representatives;

(viii) wilderness advocates;

(ix) ranchers and agriculture advocates;

(x) oil, gas, and mining producers;

(xi) fishing, hunting, and other wildlife interests;

(xii) timber producers;

(xiii) other interested parties; and

(xiv) the Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands; and

(b) develop ways to obtain input from Utah citizens regarding the transfer of public lands and the future care and use of public lands.

(4) The coordinator may contract with another state agency or private entity to assist the coordinator and office with the study and economic analysis required by

Subsection (2)(a).

(5) The coordinator shall submit a final report on the study and economic analysis described in Subsection (2)(a), including proposed legislation and recommendations, to the governor, the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee, and the Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands before November 30, 2014.

Amended by Chapter 319, 2014 General Session